

News Release



Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuge Complex
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www.fws.gov/mcriver/

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Date: June 4, 2010

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McNary National Wildlife Refuge Temporary Closures

As part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's on-going efforts to rehabilitate areas burned by wildfires, the Wallula Unit of the McNary National Wildlife Refuge will be temporarily closed to all access. The temporary closure will begin on or about June 10, 2010. The start and duration of the temporary closure will be weather dependent.

This temporary closure will allow the Service to aerially apply herbicide to control yellow starthistle, rush skeletonweed, and other non-native, invasive plants prior to native seed planting and additional rehabilitation measures. In addition, an area of the Hanford Reach National Monument across from Horn Rapids County Park will also receive aerial herbicide spraying during the same time.

The temporary closure is needed to continue restoration of native shrubs and grasses that burned in wildfires during the summers of 2008 and 2009. There will be additional weed control efforts through the coming year, competitive revegetation work, native seed application, and hand-planting of native plants (e.g., sagebrush, bitterbrush, winterfat, Piper's daisy) this coming winter.

It is important that visitors heed closure signs and closed gates for their own safety and for the safety of the crews conducting the restoration operations. Visitors may call the Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuge Complex headquarters at (509) 546-8300 for up-to-date information on closures during this rehabilitation effort, including potential weekend closures.

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